



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

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IM Weekly Highlights



- IM leaders visited with several local jurisdictions over the last week seeking support of the funding plan for the statewide public safety communications system. These visits will continue through the month of January.
- Blackfoot Tribe registered 48 new radios on the system after completing their flash upgrades and programming last week. This is the first tribe to use the new trunked system in the state.
- Concrete work at the Belle Prairie site is completed in preparation for the shelter to be delivered later this month, weather permitting.

Upcoming IMTC Meeting Features Exalt Communications Microwave Presentation

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Airplane tickets are purchased and calendars are set to have representatives from Exalt Communications attend the Jan. 24 IM Technical Committee (IMTC) meeting in Helena. Exalt will inform members about microwave backhaul and connectivity products with an emphasis on last-mile hop applications.

A two-hour presentation is planned, starting at 12:30 pm. The agenda and handouts are available at this link: http://interop.mt.gov/imtc_meetings.mcp.x.

All IMTC members are encouraged to attend. In addition, space is available for other interested individuals. Mark your calendars now!

FCC Holds Workshop on VHF/UHF Narrowbanding

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau is holding a workshop on VHF/UHF narrowbanding on Wed., Jan. 26 from 1:00-4:30 pm ET. The purpose of the session is to assist licensees in completing the transition to narrowband radio communications by Jan. 1, 2013.

The workshop will provide Public Safety and Industrial/Business licensees with information regarding the transition to narrowbanding, and will

include input from federal agencies, equipment manufacturers and public-safety organizations to help ensure timely compliance with the nationwide deadline. A complete agenda will be released closer to the event date.

The workshop, which will be held in Washington D.C. will be broadcast live over the Internet from the FCC's web page at www.fcc.gov/live. The FCC webcast is free to the public. Those who watch the live video stream of the event may e-mail event-related questions to livequestions@fcc.gov. Panel moderators will work to respond to as many questions as possible during the workshop depending on the volume and time constraints.

The HAM will let you know when the workshop agenda is released.

NPSTC Narrowbanding Questionnaire

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) has created a narrowbanding questionnaire to determine the status of narrowbanding across the country. Completing the questionnaire will help the FCC assist jurisdictions to develop useful strategies to help reach the narrowbanding goal. The questionnaire may be accessed by pasting this link into your browser: <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e35mhk20gqwakvl5/start>.



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated that all public safety and business industrial Land Mobile Radio (LMR) systems operating in the 150-512 MHz radio band cease using 25 kHz efficiency technology and begin using at least 12.5 kHz efficiency technology.

This narrowband mandate is only two short years away and affects more than just public safety. In general, it affects any user operating at VHF (150-174 MHz) and UHF (421-512 MHz) utilizing Part 90 frequencies, which includes, but is not limited to, public safety, public works, utilities, hospitals, higher education and K-12 schools. If you are uncertain if this directive will affect your radio operations or if you need more information on the steps to begin your narrowbanding effort, please visit the [NPSTC](http://www.npstc.org) and/or [FCC](http://www.fcc.gov) websites.

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In the meantime, we encourage you to weigh in on your progress toward achieving narrowband goals by completing the NPSTC questionnaire.

Central Consortium Held Dec. Meeting

By Dan Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov

The Central Montana Interoperability Consortia (CMICC) met at Great Falls on Thurs., Dec. 9, 2010. Project Director Cheri Kilby reported on the IM Business Plan and the proposed user fee structure. Discussion ensued about county acceptance of this approach to sustain the IM.

The group also discussed the status of the IM request for a Legislative Interim Study Committee. Based on the results of the study, there is the possibility of returning to the Legislature in 2013 with a cost sharing proposal between the state and counties for IM sustainability. The House Joint Resolution is referred to as LC 0090 and sponsored by Representative Edith McClafferty. The Joint Resolution may be found at this link: <http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/2011/billhtml/HJ0003.htm>.

CMICC members also discussed the need for narrow banding radios by 2013. The 2013 date for narrow band conversion has been set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). In addition, members learned that EMS organizations are eligible to receive a digital radio free if 50% of its members complete the on-line course Mutual Aid for EMS. For more information on this Montana DPHHS opportunity, follow this link: http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/ems/emsnews/radio_grant.html.

Finally, election of new consortium officers was discussed as a possible agenda item for the Jan. meeting. Cheri Kilby and Dorothy Gremaux have been officers for about four years. The consensus of the group was that they have done a great job and should remain in their positions.

MDT Consortium

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

Buoyed by the acquisition of new mobile data computers across Montana, the Mobile Data Consortia laid the foundation for future goals during their Jan. 6 meeting in Bozeman.

Custer County and vendor representatives reported that the recently approved server funded through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) technology grant is ordered and expected to be delivered soon. This, along with the mobile units distributed in the eastern half of Montana, will allow additional law enforcement personnel to

access critical CJIN and dispatch information that was not possible previously in the region. Dates for installation and testing have not yet been set. Most mobile computers have been distributed and the Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) continues to look for funding mechanisms.

Sheriff Leo Dutton led the group through a process of setting organizational vision and goals for the future. Discussion centered on providing mobile data technology to additional jurisdictions along with information interoperability. Consortium Chair Dutton asked the Finance and Technology Committees to continue to assess mobile data needs across the state. Lewis and Clark Sheriff's Office Representative, Steve Adsem, will lead a team, supported by the PSSB, to develop an assessment strategy to determine mobile data unit requirements and technology needs. It was proposed that this assessment be completed by mid-spring.

The next MDT Consortium meeting will be held Feb. 17 in Billings. All public safety entities interested in mobile data technologies are encouraged to participate.

Upcoming Meetings

• Mon., Jan. 10

IM Finance Committee (IMFC)

Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

• Mon., Jan. 10

IM Governance Committee (IMGC)

Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

• Tues., Jan. 11

IM Project Directors Meeting (IMPD)

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.

• Thurs., Jan. 20

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium

Butte • 10:00 am - noon

Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George Street

• Mon., Jan. 24

IM Technical Committee Meeting (IMTC)

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.

• Tues., Jan. 25

Tri-County Consortium

Helena • 10:00 am - noon

IM Offices, 2717 Skyway Dr.

• Tues., Jan. 25

State Agency Radio Users Task Force

Helena • 9:00 – 10:30 am

Rm. 109, Old Livestock Building, 1310 E. Lockey St.